

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 00379 051020Z

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TAGS: PFOR CH UK CA FR

SUBJECT: ESCAPED CAMBODIAN PEKING UNIVERSITY STUDENT

SEEKING REFUGE IN THIRD COUNTRY BUT NOT US

SUMMARY: WE LEARNED MID-AFTERNOON MARCH 5 THAT UK, FRENCH AND CANADIAN EMBASSIES HAVE BEEN ASKED BY LOCAL WESTERN NEWSMEN TO ARRANGE ASYLUM FOR CAMBODIAN STUDENT WHO ESCAPED MARCH 4 FROM CAMBODIAN EMBASSY TO AVOID BEING RETURNED FORCIBLY TO PHNOM PENH. AS OF EARLY AFTERNOON MARCH 5, STUDENT WAS STILL IN LONDON TIMES CORRESPONDENT DAVID BONAVIA'S APARTMENT. CHINESE ARE AWARE OF MATTER BUT THEIR ACTIONS UNKNOWN. UK AMBASSADOR YOUDE REPORTEDLY HAS SOUGHT APPOINTMENT WITH MFA TO PROTECT BONAVIA AND TO URGE CHINESE TO PERMIT CAMBODIAN TO OBTAIN VISA AND TO LEAVE COUNTRY. WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT STUDENT HIMSELF, OR NEWSMEN WHO ARE COOPERATING WITH BONAVIA TO SUPPRESS STORY, OR OTHER EMBASSY WILL INVOLVE USLO AND WE, OF COURSE, WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK TO AVOID INVOLVEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING IS STORY AS VOLUNTEERED BY REUTERS CORRESPONDENT ROGERS IN CHANCE ENCOUNTER WITH USLO ECON OFFICER. ROGERS, WHO LIVES IN SAN LI TUN COMPOUND, IS AMONG NEWSMEN ASSISTING AT TIMES CORRESPONDENT'S APARTMENT IN CHIEN KUO MEN WAI COMPOUND, IN CARING FOR CAMBODIAN AND HAS JOINED OTHER CORRESPONDENTS IN EMBARGOING STORY. USLO OFFI-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 PEKING 00379 051020Z

CER LISTENED TO NARRATIVE, PROMISED ROGERS WE WOULD HOLD

INFO CLOSELY, BUT DID NOT OTHERWISE INVOLVE HIMSELF.

2. CHEM KAEN NEDY (PHONETIC), A CAMBODIAN STUDENT AT PEKING UNIVERSITY WHOSE FATHER IS A SIHANOUK

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THE CAMBODIAN EMBASSY UNDER GUARD. HIS FATHER APPARENTLY RECENTLY RETURNED TO CAMBODIA WITH A PROMISE THAT HE WOULD BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE AGAIN. BUT THERE HAS BEEN NO WORD FROM HIS FATHER SINCE HE ENTERED CAMBODIA, AND CHEM WAS RECENTLY INFORMED THAT HE HAD BEEN SENT TO THE COUNTRYSIDE.

3. CHEM ESCAPED FROM THE CAMBODIAN EMBASSY EVENING OF MARCH 4 BY CLIMBING THROUGH RESTROOM WINDOW. HE FIRST WENT TO THE HOME OF A JAPANESE ACQUAINTANCE BUT FOUND NO ONE THERE. HE THEN PROCEEDED TO THE RESIDENCE, IN CHIEN KUO MEN WAI COMPOUND, OF A LONDON TIMES CORRESPONDENT, DAVID BONA VIA, WHOM HE HAD ONCE MET. WHEN BONA VIA OPENED THE DOOR, CHEM, IN DISTRAUT STATE, INFORMED HIM OF HIS DETENTION BY THE CAMBODIAN EMBASSY AND THREATENED TO COMMIT SUICIDE IF BONA VIA WOULD NOT LET HIM STAY AT HIS APARTMENT. CHEM IS REPORTEDLY UNSTABLE, AND HAS TRIED TO COMMIT SUICIDE TWICE.

4. SINCE CHEM SPEAKS NO ENGLISH, BONA VIA CALLED IN AFP CORRESPONDENT RENE FLIPO. THEY STAYED UP WITH CHEM THE ENTIRE NIGHT TO INSURE THAT HE DID NOT HARM HIMSELF. MORNING OF MARCH 5 BONA VIA CONTACTED THE FRENCH, THE UK AND THE CANADIAN EMBASSIES TO SEE IF ANYTHING COULD BE DONE FOR CHEM. THE FRENCH ADVISED BONA VIA THAT THEY WOULD FAVORABLY CONSIDER ISSUING CHEM A VISA IF HE WERE ABLE TO APPLY IN PERSON AT THE EMBASSY. THE CANADIANS ALSO HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO INTERVIEW CHEM FOR A VISA AT BONA VIA'S APARTMENT. BRITISH RESPONSE UNKNOWN

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SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 PEKING 00379 051020Z

ASKED FOR A GUARANTEE OF SAFE-CONDUCT FOR CHEM TO ALLOW HIM TO GO TO THE FRENCH EMBASSY. THE INFORMATION DEPARTMENT LATER INFORMED BONA VIA THAT THEY COULD GIVE NO SUCH GUARANTEE AND THAT BONA VIA HAD NO RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN THIS SITUATION.. BONA VIA THEN CONTACTED THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, APPRISED HIM OF THE SITUATION, AND ASKED FOR HIS ASSISTANCE. THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR REPORTEDLY HAS ASKED FOR AN APPOINTMENT WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO RAISE THE MATTER AND PLANS TO TAKE THE POSITION THAT THE MINISTRY'S DENIAL OF A SAFE CONDUCT FOR CHEM

HAS PUT A UK SUBJECT (BONAVIA) IN AN IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION.
WE HAVE NOT HEARD WHETHER THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS YET
RESPONDED TO THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S REQUEST.

6. WESTERN JOURNALISTS IN PEKING HAVE MET AND HAVE
AGREED NOT TO FILE ANYTHING ON THIS MATTER FOR THE TIME
BEING, SINCE THEY BELIEVE SILENCE ON THEIR PART IS ONE OF THE FEW
LEVERS THEY HAVE TO OBTAIN PRC COOPERATION IN GETTING CHEM TO THE
FRENCH EMBASSY. THEY HAVE ALSO SET UP SHIFTS TO WATCH OVER CHEM SO
THAT BONAVIA AND HIS WIFE CAN GET SOME SLEEP.

7. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, NONE OF PERSONS AWARE OF CASE, INCLUDING
STUDENT HIMSELF, HAS ANY INTENTION OF INVOLVING USLO IN THE MATTER
AND WE WILL STRIVE TO AVOID INVOLVEMENT, INCLUDING TAKING STEPS TO
KEEP USLO PERSONNEL OUT OF ENTRYWAY OF BONAVIA'S APARTMENT.
THAYER

NOTE BY OC/T: (#) OMISSIONS. CORRECTIONS TO FOLLOW.

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